

The Right Attitude in Work
&
The Right Spirit

**Administrative Training Institute
Government of West Bengal**

Block FC, Sector-III, Bidhan Nagar, Kolkata-700 106

<http://www:atiwb.nic.in>

How to read this booklet

Read a little at a time, keeping the mind as tranquil as one can, without making an effort to understand, but keeping the head as silent as possible, and letting the force contained in what one reads enter deep within. This force received in the calm and the silence will do its work of light and, if needed, will create in the brain the necessary cells for the understanding. Thus, when one re-reads the same thing some months later, one perceives that the thought expressed has become much more clear and close, and even sometimes altogether familiar.

It is preferable to read regularly, a little every day, and at a fixed hour if possible; this facilitates the brain-receptivity.

—The Mother.

Work : Our Means of Inner Spiritual Rebirth

Rise above our natural being and normal mind, above our intellectual and ethical perplexities into another consciousness with another law of being and therefore another standpoint for our action; where personal desire and personal emotions no longer govern it; where the dualities fall away; where the action is no longer our own and where therefore the sense of personal virtue and personal sin is exceeded; where the impersonal, the divine spirit works out through us its purpose in the world; where we are ourselves by a new and divine birth changed into being of that Being, consciousness of that Consciousness, power of that Power, bliss of that Bliss, and, living no longer in our lower nature, have no works to do of our own, no personal aim to pursue of our own, but do only the divine works, those of which our outward nature is only a passive instrument and no longer the cause, no longer provides the motive; for the motive-power is above us in the will of the Master of our works.

This upward transference of our centre of being and the consequent transformation of our whole existence and consciousness, with, a resultant change in the whole spirit and motive of our action, the action often remaining precisely the same in all its outward appearances, makes the gist of the Gita's Karmayoga. Change your being, be reborn into the spirit and by that new birth proceed with the action to which the Spirit within has appointed you, may be said to be the heart of its message. Or again, put otherwise, with a deeper and more spiritual import, make the work you have to do here your means of inner spiritual rebirth, the divine birth, and, having become divine, do still divine works as an instrument of the Divine for the leading of the peoples... the outward form of it [the work] need not at all change, although really its scope and aim become quite different—the elucidation of one elucidates the other. The spirit of our action arises from the nature of our being and the inner foundation it has taken, but also this nature is itself affected by the trend and spiritual effect of our action; a very great change in the spirit of our works changes the nature of our being and alters the foundation it has taken; it shifts the centre of conscious force from which we act.



Importance of Right Attitude in Work

What is of first importance is not the religious or non-religious character of the work done, but the inner attitude in which it is done. If the attitude is vital and not psychic, then one throws oneself out in the work and loses the inner contact. If it is psychic, the inner contact remains, the Force is felt supporting or doing the work and the sadhana progresses.



The soul in us develops itself by life and works and, not indeed so much the action itself, but the way of our soul's inner force of working determines its relations to the Spirit. This is, indeed, the justification of Karmayoga as a practical means of the higher self-realization.



It is the spirit or consciousness in which the work is done that matters most; the outer form can vary greatly for different natures.

It is not the form of the work itself or mere activity but the consciousness and Godward will behind it that are the essence of Karmayoga; the work is only the necessary instrumentation for the union with the Master of works, the transit to the pure Will and power of Light from the will and power of the Ignorance.



I do not regard business as something evil or tainted, any more than it is so regarded in ancient spiritual India...All depends on the spirit in which a thing is done, the principles on which it is built and the use to which it is turned—Krishna calls upon Arjuna to carry on

war of the most terrible kind and by his example encourage men to do every kind of human work, *sarvakarmani*...a man by doing in the right way and in the right spirit the work dictated to him by his fundamental nature, temperament and capacity and according to his and its dharma can move towards the Divine...It is in his view quite possible for a man to do business and make money and earn profits and yet be a spiritual man, practice yoga, have an inner life...that work must be done without desire, without attachment to any fruit or reward, without any egoistic attitude or motive, as an offering or sacrifice to the Divine. This is the traditional Indian attitude towards these things, that all work can be done if it is done according to the dharma and, if it is rightly done, it does not prevent the approach to the Divine or the access to spiritual knowledge and the Spiritual life...

Obviously, greed for wealth and money-making has to be absent from his nature as much as greed for food or any other greed and all attachment to these things must be renounced from his consciousness. But I do not regard the ascetic way of living as indispensable to spiritual perfection or as identical with it. There is the way of spiritual self-mastery and the way of spiritual self-giving and surrender to the Divine, abandoning ego and desire even in the midst of action or of any kind of work or all kinds of work demanded from us by the Divine. If it were not so, there would not have been great spiritual men like Janaka or Vidura in India and even there would have been no Krishna or else Krishna would have been not the Lord of Brindavan and Mathura and Dwarka or a prince and warrior or the charioteer of Kurukshetra, but only one more great anchorite.



The including of the outer consciousness in the transformation is of supreme importance in this yoga—meditation cannot do it. Meditation can deal only with the inner being. So work is of primary importance— only it must be done with the right attitude and in the right consciousness.



The One Rule in Work

I do not mean by work action done in the ego and the ignorance, for the satisfaction of the ego and in the drive of rajasic desire. There can be no Karmayoga without the will to get rid of ego, rajas and desire, which are the seals of ignorance.

I do not mean philanthropy or the service of humanity or all the rest of the things—moral or idealistic—which the mind of man substitutes for the deeper truth of works.

I mean by work action done for the Divine and more and more union with the Divine—for the Divine alone and nothing else. Naturally this is not easy in the beginning...But it has to be begun in the right spirit and attitude, with the right will in you, then all the rest will come.

If one feels human beings to be near and the Divine to be far and seeks the Divine through service of and love of human beings and not the direct service and love of the Divine, then one is following a wrong principle — for that is the principle of the mental, vital and moral not the spiritual life.

The only work that spiritually purifies is that which is done without personal motives, without desire for fame or public recognition, or worldly greatness, without insistence on one's own mental motives or vital lusts and demands or physical preferences, without vanity or crude self assertion or claim for position or prestige, done for the sake of the Divine alone and at the command of the Divine. All work done in an egoistic spirit, however good for people in the world of the Ignorance, is of no avail to the seeker of the yoga.

Any work done well and carefully as a sacrifice to the Divine, without desire or egoism, with equality of mind and calm tranquility in good or bad fortune, for the sake of the Divine and not for the sake of any personal gain, reward or result, with the consciousness that it is the Divine Power to which all work belongs, is a means of self-dedication through Karma.

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Not only in your inward concentration, but also in your outward acts and movements you must take the right attitude...In your work and acts you must do the same as in your concentration. Open to the Mother, put them under her guidance, call in the peace, the supporting Power, the protection and, in order that they may work, reject all wrong influences that might come in their way by creating wrong, careless or unconscious movements.

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The Condition of Success

What you have to realize is that your success or failure depends, first and always, on your keeping in the right attitude and in the true psychic and spiritual atmosphere and allowing the Mother's force to act through you...

Proceed with our work, never forgetting the condition of success. Do not lose yourself in the work or in your ideas or plans or forget to keep yourself in constant touch with the true source. Do not allow anybody's mind or vital influence or the influence of the surrounding atmosphere or the ordinary human mentality to come between you and the power and presence of the Mother.

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Action and event have no value in themselves, but only take their value from the force which they represent and the idea which they symbolize and which the force is there to serve.

Men see events as unaccomplished, to be striven for and effected. This is false seeing. Events are not affected, they develop. The event is Brahman, already accomplished from of old, it is now manifesting.

Self-affirmation is not the aim; the formation of a collective vital ego is also not *the* aim. The merging of the little ego in union with the Divine, purification, surrender, the substitution of the Divine guidance for one's own ignorant self-guidance based on one's personal ideas and personal feelings is the aim of Karmayoga, the surrender of one's own will to the Divine Will.

Spirit of Self-Consecration

Life, not a remote silent or high-uplifted ecstatic Beyond—Life alone, is the field of our Yoga. The transformation of our superficial, narrow and fragmentary human way of thinking seeing, feeling and being into a deep and wide spiritual consciousness and an integrated inner and outer existence and of our ordinary human living into the divine way of life must be its central purpose. The means towards this supreme end is a self-giving of all our nature to the Divine. Everything must be given to the Divine within us, to the universal All and to the transcendent Supreme. An absolute concentration of our will, our heart and our thought on that one and manifold Divine, an unreserved self-consecration of our whole being to the Divine alone—this is the decisive movement.

The first necessity is an entire spirit of self-consecration in our works; it must become first the constant will, then the ingrained need in all the being, finally its automatic but living and conscious habit, the self-existent turn to do all action as a sacrifice to the Supreme and to the veiled Power present in us and in all beings and in all the workings of the universe. Life is the altar of this sacrifice, works are our offerings; a transcendent and universal Power and Presence as yet rather felt or glimpsed than known or seen by us is the Deity to whom they are offered. This sacrifice, this self-consecration has two sides to it; there is the work itself and there is the spirit in which it is done, the spirit of worship to the Master of Works in all that we see, think and experience.

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Every moment and every movement of our, being is to be resolved into a continuous and a devoted self-giving to the Eternal. All our actions, not less the smallest and most ordinary and trifling than the greatest and most uncommon and noble, must be performed [^] as consecrated acts. Our individualized nature must live in the* single consciousness of an inner and outer movement dedicated to something, that is beyond us and greater than our ego. No matter what the gift and to whom it is presented by us, there must be consciousness in the act that we are presenting it to the one divine Being in all beings. Our commonest or most grossly material actions must assume this sublimated character; when we eat, we should be conscious that we are giving our food to that Presence in us; it must be a sacred offering in a temple and the sense of a mere physical need or self-gratification must pass away from us. In any great labour, in any high discipline, in any difficult or noble enterprise, whether undertaken for ourselves, for others. The thing we are doing must be consciously offered as a sacrifice of works, not to thee, but either through them or directly to the One Godhead; the Divine Inhabitant who was hidden by these figures must be no longer hidden but ever present to our soul, our mind, our sense. The workings and results of our acts must be put in the hands of that One in the feeling that Presence is the Infinite -and Most High by whom alone our labour and our aspiration are possible. For in his being all' takes place; for him all labour and aspiration are taken from us by Nature and offered on his altar. Even in those things in which Nature is herself very plainly the worker and we only the witnesses of her working and its containers and supporters, there should be the same constant memory and insistent consciousness of a work and of its divine Master. Our very inspiration and respiration, our very heartbeats can and must be made conscious in us as the living rhythm of the universal sacrifice...

Even if such a discipline is begun without devotion, it leads straight and inevitably towards the highest devotion possible; for it must deepen naturally into the completes adoration imaginable, the most profound God-love. There is bound up with it a growing sense of the Divine in all our thought, will and action and at every moment of our lives, a more and more moved consecration to the Divine of the totality of our being.



When we speak of the sacrifice of works by itself, we do not mean the offering only, of our outward acts, but of all that is active and dynamic in us; our internal movements no less than our external doings are to be consecrated on the one altar.



Renunciation of All Attachment

So long as we work with attachment to the result, the sacrifice is offered not to the Divine, but to our ego. We may think otherwise, but we are deceiving ourselves; we are making our idea of the Divine, our sense of duty, our feeling for our fellow-creatures, our idea of what is good for the world or others, even our obedience to the Master a mask for our egoistic satisfactions and preferences and a specious shield against the demand made on us to root all desire out of our nature...

This figure of the ego is the enemy against whom we have to be always on our guard with an unsleeping vigilance. We need not be discouraged when we find him lurking within us and assuming all sort of disguises, but we should be vigilant to detect him in all his masks and inexorable in expelling his influence. The illumining World of this movement is the decisive line of the Gita, "To action thou has a right but never under any circumstances to its fruit." The fruit belongs solely to the Lord of all works; our only business with it is to prepare the success by a true and careful action and to offer it, if it comes, to the divine Master. Afterwards even as we have renounced attachment to the fruit, we must renounce attachment to the work; at any moment we must be prepared to change one work, one course of one field of action for another or abandon all works if that is the clear command of the Master. Otherwise we do the act not for his sake but for our satisfaction and pleasure in the work, from the kinetic nature's need for action or for the

fulfillment of our propensities; but these are all stations and refuges of the ego. However necessary for our ordinary notion of life, they have to be abandoned in the growth of the spiritual consciousness and replaced by divine counterparts: an Ananda, an impersonal and God-directed delight will cast out or supplant the unilluminated vital satisfaction and pleasure, a joyful driving of the Divine Energy the kinetic need; the fulfillment of the propensities will no longer be an object or a necessity, there will be instead the fulfillment of the Divine Will through the natural dynamic truth in action of a free soul and a luminous nature. In the end, as the attachment to the fruit of the work and to the work itself has been excused from the heart, so also the last clinging attachment to the idea and sense of ourselves as the doer has to be relinquished ; the Divine Shakti must be known and felt above and within us as the true and sole worker.



Equality of Mind and Soul

The renunciation of attachment to the work and its fruit is the beginning of a wide movement towards an absolute equality in the mind and soul which must become all enveloping if we are to be perfect in the spirit... Equality is the sign of this adoration ; it is the soul's ground on which true sacrifice and workshop can be done... We must hate none, despise none, be repelled by none; for in all we have to see the One disguised or manifested at his pleasure. He is a little revealed in one or more revealed in another or concealed and wholly distorted in others according to his will and his knowledge of what is best for that which he intends to become in form in them and to do in works in their nature. All is our self, one self that has taken many shapes. Hatred and dislike and scorn and repulsion, clinging and attachment and preference are natural, necessary, inevitable at a certain stage... The child-soul needs them for its growth; but they drop from an adult in the divine culture. In the God-nature to which we have to rise there can be an adamant, even a destructive severity but not hatred, a divine irony but not scorn, a calm, clear-seeing and forceful rejection but not repulsion and dislike. Even what we have to destroy, we must not abhor or fail to recognise as disguised and temporary movement of the Eternal...

The truth is what we must seek and discover behind the transitory expression; undeterred by appearances, by the deficiencies or the disfigurements of the expression, we can then worship the Divine for ever unsullied, pure, beautiful and perfect behind his masks. All indeed has to be changed, not ugliness accepted but divine beauty, not imperfection taken as our resting place but perfection striven after, the supreme good made the universal aim and not evil. But what we do has to be done with a spiritual understanding and knowledge, and it is a divine good, beauty, perfection, pleasure that has to be followed after, not the human standards of these things. If we have not equality, it is a sign that we are still pursued by the Ignorance, we shall truly understand nothing and it is more than likely that we shall destroy the old imperfection only to create another: for we are substituting the appreciations of our human mind and desire-soul for the divine values.

Equality does not mean a fresh ignorance or blindness; it does not call for and need not initiate a grayness of vision and a blotting out of all hues. Difference is there, variation of expression is there and this -variation we shall appreciate, far more justly than we could when the eye was clouded by a partial and erring love and hate, admiration and scorn, sympathy and antipathy, attraction and repulsion. But behind the variation we shall always see the Complete and Immutable who dwells within it and we shall feel, know or at least, if it is hidden from us, trust in the wise purpose and divine necessity of the particular manifestation, whether it appear to our human standards harmonious and perfect or crude and unfinished or even false . and evil.

And so too we shall have the same equality of mind and soul towards all happening, painful or pleasurable, defeat and success, honour and disgrace, good repute and ill-repute, good fortune and evil fortune. For in all happenings we shall see the will of the Master of all works and results and a step in the evolving expression of the Divine.



Abolition of the Ego-Sense

Even when by giving up the fruits and the desire of the fruits to the Master of the Sacrifice we have parted with the egoism of rajasic desire, we may still have kept the egoism of the worker. Still we are subject to the sense that we are ourselves the doer of the act, ourselves its source and ourselves the giver- of the sanction. It is still the "I" that chooses and determines, it is still the "I" that undertakes the responsibility and feels the demerit or the merit. An entire removal of this separative ego-sense is an essential aim of our Yoga...

For not only the fruit of works belongs to the Lord alone, but our works also must be his; he is the true Lord of our action no less than of our results. This we must not see with the thinking mind only, it must become entirely true to our entire consciousness and will...see and feel concretely and intensely even in the moment of the work and in its initiation and whole process that his works are not his at all but are coming through him from the Supreme. Existence. He must be always aware of a Force, a Presence, a Will that acts through his individual nature. But there is in taking this turn the danger that he may confuse his own disguised or sublimated ego or an inferior power with the Lord and substitute its demands for the supreme dictates. He may fall into a common ambush of this lower nature and distort his supposed surrender to a higher Power into an excuse for a magnified and uncontrolled indulgence of his own self-will and even of his desires and passions. A great sincerity is asked for and has to be imposed—especially in our subliminal vital nature, an incorrigible charlatan and actor...At every moment he must proceed with a vigilant eye upon the deceits of the ego and the ambushes of the misleading Powers of Darkness who ever represent themselves as the one source of Light and Truth and take on them a simulacrum of divine forms in order to capture the soul of the seeker.

Immediately he must take the further step of relegating himself to the position of the Witness—Nature works in us, says the Gita, through the triple quality of Prakriti, the quality of light and good, the quality of passion and desire and the quality of obscurity and inertia. The seeker must learn to distinguish, as an impartial and discerning witness of all that proceeds within this kingdom of his nature, the separate and the combined action of these qualities; he must pursue the workings of the cosmic forces in him through all the labyrinth of their subtle unseen processes and disguises and known every intricacy of the maze. As he proceeds in this knowledge, he will be able to become the giver of the sanction and no longer remain an ignorant tool of Nature. At first he must induce the Nature-Force in its action on his instruments to subdue the working of its two lower qualities and bring them into subjection to the quality of light and good and, afterward, he must persuade that again to offer itself so that all three may be transformed by a higher Power into their divine equivalents, supreme repose and calm, divine illumination and bliss, the eternal divine dynamic, Tapes.

(finally) No longer giving the sanction, he will rather receive in his instruments and follow in her hands a divine mandate, No longer doing works, he will accept their execution through him by her unsleeping Force. No longer willing the fulfillment of his own mental constructions and the satisfaction of his own emotional desires, he will obey and participate in an omnipotent Will that is also an omniscient Knowledge and a mysterious, magical and unfathomable Love and a vast bottomless sea of the eternal Bliss of Existence.

A Caution

If the egoism of the worker disappears, the egoism of the instrument may replace it or else prolong it in a disguise...There must be no egoism of any kind in the attitude of the instrument, even when we are fully conscious of the greatness of the Force within us. Every man is knowingly or unknowingly the instrument of a universal Power and, apart from the inner Presence, there is no such essential difference between one action and another, one kind of instrumentation and another as would warrant the folly of an egoistic pride...If the potter shapes one pot more perfectly than another, the merit lies not in the vessel but the maker. The attitude of our mind must not be "This is my strength" or "Behold God's power in me", but rather "A Divine Power works in this mind and body and it is the same that

works in all men and in the animal, in the plant and in the metal, in conscious and living things and in things appearing to be inconscient and inanimate." This large view of the One working in all and of the whole world as the equal instrument of a divine action and gradual self-expression, if it becomes our entire experience, will help to eliminate all rajasic egoism out of us and even the sattvic ego-sense will begin to pass away from our nature.

Divine Perfection—Our Aim

Not only liberation but perfection must be the aim of the Karmayoga...if our nature is imperfect, the work also will be imperfect, mixed, inadequate. Even it may be marred by gross errors, falsehoods, moral weaknesses, diverting influences. The work of the Divine will be done in us even then, but according to our weakness, not according to the strength and purity of its source...At each step we say in the language of the Sanskrit verse, "Even as I am appointed by Thee seated in my heart, so. O Lord, I act." ...Action without desire is possible, action without attachment is possible, action without ego is possible.

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How to Begin

If you can't as yet remember the Divine all the time you are working it does not greatly matter. To remember and dedicate at the beginning and give thanks at the end ought to be enough for the present. Or at the most to remember too when there is a pause—When people remember all the time during work (it can be done) it is usually with the back of their minds or else there is created gradually a faculty of double thought or else a double consciousness—one in front that works, and one within that witnesses and remembers—Aspiration and will of consecration calling down a greater Force to do the work is a method which brings great results—get things done by the Power behind or above instead of doing all by the mind's effort.

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Work has a value of moral training, discipline, obedience acceptance of work for the Mother. The spiritual value and result come afterwards when the consciousness in the vital opens upward. So with the mental work. It is a preparation—the work as well as the mental occupation must be done with the right mental or vital will in it.

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To do only what you like is to indulge the vital and maintain its domination over the nature—for that is the very principle of the untransformed nature, to be governed by its likes and dislikes. To be able to do anything with equanimity is the principle of Karmayoga and to with joy because it is done for the Mother is the true psychic and vital condition in this Yoga.

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All work done for the Divine, **from** poetry and art and music to carpentry or baking or sweeping a room, should be made perfect even in its smallest external detail as well as in the spirit in which it is done; for only then is it an altogether fit offering.

The first step... is to consecrate all our works as a sacrifice to the Divine in us and in the world; this is an attitude of the mind and heart, not too difficult to initiate, but very difficult to make absolutely sincere and all-pervasive. The second step is to renounce attachment to the fruit of our works; for the only true, inevitable and utterly desirable fruit of sacrifice—the one thing needful—is the Divine Presence and the Divine Consciousness and Power in us, and if that is gained, all else will be added. This is a transformation of the egoistic will in our vital being our desire-soul and desire-nature... The third step is to get rid of the central egoism and even the ego-sense of the worker... Only when the small ego-sense is rooted out from the nature can the seeker know his true person that stands above as a portion and a power of the Divine and renounce all motive-force other than the will of the Divine Shakti.

How to work

When you feel tired, don't overstrain yourself but rest, doing only your ordinary work; restlessly doing something or other all the time is not the way to cure it. To be quiet without and within is what is needed when there is this sense of fatigue. There is always a strength near you which you can call in and will remove these things, but you must learn to be quiet in order to receive it.

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If it is a work that you are doing for the collectivity and not for yourself personally, then you must do it whatever happens. It is an elementary discipline... At all times, unless you are absolutely ill, ill in the last degree and unable to move, you must do it... An unselfish work always cures you of your petty personal maladies... if you are just a little indisposed then doing your work, not thinking of yourself, thinking of the work, doing it as well as you can, that puts you right immediately.

To take advantage of what is good in others, keeping one's eye always on that and to deal tactfully with their mistakes, faults and defects is the best way; it does not exclude firmness and maintenance of discipline, even severity when severity is due; but the latter should be rare and the others should not feel it as if it were a permanent attitude,

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To discourage anybody is wrong, but to give false encouragement or encouragement of anything wrong is not right. Severity has sometimes to be used (though not overused) when without it an obstinate persistence in what is wrong cannot be set right.

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It (disciplining the subordinates) has to be done in the right spirit and the subordinates must be able to feel that it is so—that they are being dealt with in all uprightness and by a man who has sympathy and insight and not only severity and energy.

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What you have to do, what is right to be done, should be done in perfect calmness with the support of the Divine Force. All that is necessary for a successful result can be done, including the securing of the support of those who are able to help you. But if this outer support is not forthcoming, you have not to be disturbed but to proceed calmly on your way. If there is any difficulty or unsuccess anywhere not due to your own fault, you have not to be troubled—Strength, unmoved calm, quiet straight and right dealing with all things you have to deal with must be the rule of your action.

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The difficulty which you experience from relatives and others is always one that intervenes as an obstacle when one has to practice the sadhana in ordinary or unfavourable surroundings. The only way to escape from it is to be able to live in oneself in one's inner being (then) the outer becomes an instrument, a means of communization and action in the outer world. It is then that it is possible to make the relations with people outside free from tie or necessary reaction—one can determine from within one's own reaction or absence of reaction.

Witness Attitude

A sort of stepping backward into something silent and observant within which is not involved in the action, yet sees and can shed its light upon it. There are then two parts of the being, one inner looking at and witnessing and knowing, the other executive and instrumental and doing. This gives not only freedom but power — and in this inner being one can get into touch with the divine not through mental activity but through the substance of the being, by a certain inward touch, perception, reception, receiving also the right inspiration or intuition of the work.

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It helps the establishment of a perfect calm and peace within, for there is then one part of the being which remains detached and sees without being disturbed by the

perturbations of the surface; it helps also the ascent into the higher consciousness and the descent of the higher consciousness, for it is through this calm, detached and liberated inner being that the ascent and descent can easily be done. Also, to have the same witness look on the movements of Prakriti in others, seeing understanding but not perturbed by them in any way is a very great help towards both the liberation and the universalisation of the being.

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The Witness attitude is not meant as a convenient means for disowning the responsibility of one's defects and thereby refusing to mend them. It is meant for self-knowledge and as a convenient station (detached and uninvolved, therefore not subject to Prakriti) from which one can act on the wrong movements by refusal of assent and by substituting for them the action of the true consciousness from within or above,

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To be the observing Purusha is a first step. Afterwards there must be the action of the Purusha Will as an instrument of the Mother's force. This will must be founded on a right consciousness, which sees what is wrong, ignorant, selfish, egoistic, moved by desire in the nature and puts it right.

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All stress of egoistic choice, all hankering after personal profit, all stipulation of self-regarding desire must be extirpated from the nature. There must be no demand for fruit and no seeking for reward; the only fruit for you is the pleasure of the Divine Mother and the fulfillment of her work, your only reward a constant progression in divine consciousness and calm and strength and bliss. The joy of service and the joy of inner growth through works is the sufficient recompense of the selfless worker...

There must be no attachment to the work or the result, no laying down of conditions, no claim to possess the Power that should possess you, no pride of the instrument, no vanity or arrogance. Nothing in the mind or in the vital or physical parts should be suffered to distort to its own use or seize for its own personal and separate satisfaction the greatness of the forces that are acting through you. Let your faith, your sincerity, your purity of aspiration be absolute and pervasive of all the planes and layers of the being; then every disturbing element and distorting influence will progressively fall away from your nature.

The Delight of Works

In thy works there are always these three, the Master, the Worker and the Instrument. To define them in oneself rightly and rightly to possess them is the secret of works and of the delight of works.

Learn thou first to be the instrument of God and to accept thy Master. The instrument is this outward thing thou callest thyself; it is a mould of mind, a driving force of power, a machinery of form, a thing full of springs and cogs and clamps and devices. Call not this the Worker or the Master; it can never be the Worker or the Master. Accept' thyself humbly, yet proudly, devotedly, submissively and joyfully as a divine instrument.

There is no greater pride and glory than to be a perfect instrument of the Master.

Learn thou first absolutely to obey. The sword does not choose where it shall strike, the arrow does not ask whither it shall be driven, the springs of the machine do not insist on the product that shall be turned out from its labour. These things are settled by the intention and working of Nature and the more the conscious instrument learns to feel and obey the pure and essential law of its nature the sooner shall the work turned out become perfect and flawless. Self-choice by the nervous motive-power, revolt of the physical and mental tool can only mar the working.

Let thyself drive in the breath of God and be as a leaf in the tempest; put thyself in His hand and be as the sword that strike and the arrow that leaps to its target. Let thy mind be as the spring of the machine, let thy force be as the shooting of a piston, let thy

work be as the grinding and shaping decent of the steel on its object. Let thy speech be the clang of the hammer on the anvil and the moan of the engine in its labour and the cry of the trumpet that proclaims the force of God to the regions. In whatever way do as an instrument the work that is natural to thee and appointed.

The sword has a joy in the battle-play, the arrow has a mirth in its hiss and its leaping, the earth has a rapture in its dizzy whirl through space, the sun has the royal ecstasy of its blazing splendours and its eternal motion. O thou self-conscious instrument, take thou too the delight of thy own appointed workings.

The sword did not ask to be made, nor does it resist its user, nor lament when it is broken. There is a joy of being made and joy of being used and a joy of being put aside and a joy too of being broken. That equal joy discover.

Because thou has mistaken the instrument for the worker and the master and because thou seekest to choose by the ignorance of thy desire thy own state and thy own profit and thy own utility, therefore thou has suffering and anguish and hast many times to be thrust into the red hell of the furnace and hast many times to be reborn and reshaped and retempered until thou shall have learnt thy human lesson.

And all these things are because they are in thy unfinished nature. For Nature is the worker and what is it that she works at? She shapes out of her crude mind and life and matter a fully conscious being.

Know thyself next as the Worker. Understand thy nature to be the worker and thy own nature and All-Nature to be thyself.

This nature-self is not proper to thee nor limited. Thy nature has made the sun and the systems, the earth and her creatures, thyself and thing and all thou art and perceivest. It is thy friend and thine enemy, thy mother and thy devourer, thy lover and thy torturer, the sister of thy soul and an alien and a stranger, thy joy and thy sorrow, thy sin and thy virtue, thy strength and thy weakness, thy knowledge and thy ignorance. And yet it is none of these things, but something of which they are attempts any imperfect images. For beyond all these it is an original self-knowledge and an infinite force and innumerable quality.

But in thee there is a special movement, a proper nature and an individual energy. Follow that like a widening river till it leads thee to its infinite source and origin.

Know therefore thy body to be a knot in Matter and thy mind to be a whirl in universal Mind and thy life to be an eddy life that is forever. Know thy force to be every other being's force and thy knowledge to be a glimmer from the light that belongs to no man and thy works to be made for thee and be delivered from the error of thy personality.

When that is done, thou shalt take thy free delight in the truth of thy individual being and in thy strength and in thy glory and in thy beauty and in thy knowledge; and *in* the denial of these things thou shalt take delight also. For all this is the dramatic mask of the Person and the self-image of the self-Sculptor.

Why shouldst thou limit thyself? Feel thyself also in the sword that strikes thee and the arms that embrace, in the blazing of the sun and the dance of the earth, in the flight of the eagle and the song of the nightingale, in all that is past and all that is now and all that is pressing forward to become. For thou art infinite and all this joy is possible to thee.

The Worker has the joy of her works and the joy of her Lover for whom she works. She knows herself to be his consciousness and his force, his knowledge and his reserving of knowledge, his unity and his self-division, his infinity and the finite of his being. Know thyself also to be these things; take thou also the delight of thy Lover.

There are those who know themselves as a workshop or an instrument or the thing worked, but the mistake the Worker for the Master; this too is an error. Those who fall into it can hardly arrive at her high, pure and perfect workings.

The instrument is finite in a personal image, the worker is universal with a personal trend, but neither of these is the Master, for neither are the true Person.

□

Know last the Master to be thyself; but to this self put no form and seek for it no definition of quality. Be one with That in thy being, commune with That in thy consciousness, obey That in thy force, be subject to That and clasped by it in thy delight, fulfil That in thy life and body and mentality. Then before an opening eye within thee there shall emerge that true and only Person, thyself and not thyself, all others and more than all others, the Director and Enjoyer of thy works, the Master of the worker and the instrument, the Reveller and Trampler in the dance of the universe and yet hushed and alone with thee in thy soul's silent and inner chamber.

The joy of the Master possessed, there is nothing else for thee to conquer. For He shall give thee Himself and all things and all creatures' getting and havings and doings and enjoyings for thy own proper portion, and He shall give thee that also which cannot be portioned.

Thou shalt contain in thy being thyself and all others and be that which is neither thyself nor all others. Of works this is the consummation and the summit.

Fix thy soul without desire upon the end and insist on it by the divine force within thee; then shall the end itself create the means, nay, it shall become its own means. For the end is Brahman and already accomplished; see it always as Brahman, see it always in thy soul as already accomplished.

The Right Spirit The Mother

In each circumstance there is a spirit which is the suitable spirit, the one you ought to have, the attitude you must inwardly take.

For example, as soon as one feels a wave of physical disequilibrium, of ill health coming, well, to concentrate in the right spirit is to concentrate in an inner calm, a trust in the divine Grace, and a will to remain in physical equilibrium and good health. This is the right spirit. In another case, one may feel a wave of anger or a fit of temper coming from outside; then one should withdraw into an inner calm, a detachment from superficial things, with a will to express only what comes from above and always be submissive to the divine Will. This is the right spirit...it always come back to the same things, that one must remember the Divine and put oneself at His service and will what He wills.

When one is perplexed, when one has to make a choice, when one doesn't know what the right thing to do is...then one must put himself as far as possible in contact with his psychic being and the divine Presence in him, present the problem to this psychic consciousness and ask for the true light, the true decision, the one most in accordance with the divine Will, and try to listen and receive the inspiration.



The right spirit means: to keep one's trust, to remain quiet... wait patiently for the attack to pass, keep one's trust.. .not to lose courage, not to lose one's faith, not to be impatient, not to be depressed; to remain very quiet and peaceful with as much aspiration as one can have, and not worry about what is happening. To have the certitude that this will pass and all will be well. This indeed is the best thing.



All depends upon the personal attitude. If, in the presence of circumstances that are on the point of occurring, you take the highest possible attitude—that is to say, if you put your consciousness in contact with the highest consciousness within your reach—you can be absolutely certain that in such a case what happens is the best that can happen to you. But as soon as you fall from this consciousness and come down into a lower state, then it is evident that what happens cannot be the best, since you are not in your best consciousness.



In the zone of immediate influence of each one, the right attitude not only has the power to turn every circumstance to advantage but can change the very circumstance itself.



Try to take pleasure in all you do, but never do anything for the sake of pleasure.

Never get excited, nervous or agitated. Remain perfectly calm in the face of all circumstances. And yet be always alert to discover what progress you still have to make and lose no time in making it.



Never take physical happenings at their face value. They are always a clumsy attempt to express something else, the true thing which escapes our superficial understanding.

Never complain of the behaviour of anyone, unless you have the power to change in his nature what makes him act in this way; and if you have the power, change him instead of complaining.

Before you eat, concentrate a few seconds in the aspiration that the food you are about to eat may bring your body the substance it needs to serve as a solid basis for your effort...and give it the energy for persistence and perseverance in the effort.

Before you go to sleep, concentrate a few seconds in the aspiration that the sleep may restore your fatigued nerves, bring calm and quietness to your brain so that on waking you may, with renewed vigour, begin again your journey on the path of the great discovery.

Before you act, concentrate in the will that your action may help or at least in no way hinder your march forward...

When you speak, before the words come out of your mouth, concentrate just long enough to check your words and allow only those that are absolutely necessary to pass, only those that are not in any way harmful to your progress.

It is by persevering that one conquers difficulties, not by running away from them. One who perseveres is sure to triumph. Victory goes to the most enduring. Always do your best and the Lord will take care of the results.

The most essential quality is perseverance, endurance and a kind of inner good humour which helps you not to get discouraged, not to become sad, and to face all difficulties with a smile—cheerfulness. If you can keep this within you, you fight much better, resist much better, in the light, these bad influences which try to hinder you from progressing.

□

Importance of Work

The whole life is a field of experience. Each movement you make, each thought you have, each work you do, can be an experience, and *must be* an experience; and naturally work in particular is a field of experience where one must apply all the progress which one endeavours to make inwardly.

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The outer life, the activity of each day and each instant, it is not the indispensable complement of our hours of meditation and contemplation? And is not the proportion of time given to each the exact image of the proportion which exists between the amount, of effort to be made for the preparation and realisation? For meditation, contemplation, Union is the result obtained—the flower that blooms; the daily activity is the anvil on which all the elements must pass and re-pass in order to be purified, refined, made supple and ripe for the illumination which contemplation gives to them. All these elements must be thus passed one after the other through the crucible before outer activity becomes needless for the integral development...pride and satisfaction with oneself (are) the worst of all obstacle. Very modestly we must take advantage of all the minute opportunities offered to knead and purify some of the innumerable elements, to make them supple, to make them impersonal, to teach them—forgetfulness of self and abnegation and devotion and kindness and gentleness.

Classification of Work

Each one must find those activities which increase his aspiration, his consciousness, his deeper knowledge of things, and those which, on the contrary, mechanise him and bring him back more thoroughly into a purely material relation with things...it depends more on the way of doing a thing than on the thing itself.

You take up some work which is quite material, like cleaning the floor or dusting a room; well, this work can lead to a very deep consciousness if it is done with certain feeling for perfection and progress; while other work considered of a higher kind as, for example, studies or literary and artistic work, if done with the idea of seeking fame or for the satisfaction of one's vanity or for some material gain, will not help you to progress. So this is already a kind of classification which depends more on the inner attitude than on the outer fact. But this classification can be applied to everything.

□ Spirit of Self-Consecration

Consciousness develops best through work done as an offering to the Divine.

Yoga means union with the Divine, and the union is effected through offering—it is founded on the offering of yourself to the Divine.

In all pursuits, intellectual or active, your one motto should be, "Remember and Offer." Let whatever you do be done as an offering to the Divine...it will prevent you from doing many foolish and useless things.

□

Renouncing Attachment to the Result

Whatever you do...you must leave the result in the hands of the Divine. Always you may try, but it is for the Divine to give you the fruit of your effort or not to give it. There your personal power stops; if the result comes, it is the Divine Power and not yours that brings it...whatever you ask for or whatever your effort, you must feel, even while trying your best, using knowledge or putting forth power, that the result depends upon the Divine Grace...This must be your attitude, "I aspire, I do my best, but for the result I put myself entirely into the hands of the Divine."

The effort for progress must be made for the love of the effort for progress. The joy of effort, the aspiration for progress must be enough in themselves, quite independent of the result...if we want to keep the right attitude, we must act, feel, think, strive spontaneously, for that is what we must do and not in view of the result to be obtained.

As soon as we think of the result we begin to bargain and that takes away all sincerity from the effort. You make an effort to progress because you feel within you the need, the imperative need to make an effort and progress; and this effort is the gift you offer to the Divine Consciousness in you, the Divine Consciousness in the Universe, it is your way of expressing your gratitude, offering your self; and whether this results in progress or not is of no importance.

If you wish to progress, if you make an effort to control yourself for instance, to overcome certain defects, weaknesses, imperfections, and if you expect to get a more or less immediate result from your effort, your effort loses all sincerity, it becomes a bargaining. You say, "See! I am going to make an effort, but that's because I want this in exchange for my effort." You are no longer spontaneous, no longer natural.

A spontaneous act, done because one cannot do otherwise, and done as an offering of goodwill, is the only one which truly has any value.

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First of all you must give up your desires; for desire is the most obscure and the most obscuring movement of the lower nature. Desires are motions of weakness and ignorance and they keep you chained to your weakness and to your ignorance. Men have the impression that their desires are born within; they feel as if they come out of themselves or arise within themselves; but it is a false impression. Desires are waves of the vast sea of the obscure lower nature and they pass from one person to another. Men do not generate a desire in themselves, but are invaded by these waves; whoever is open and without defence is caught in them and tossed about. Desire by engrossing and possessing him makes him incapable of any discrimination and gives him the impression that it is part of his nature to manifest it. In reality, it has nothing to do with his true nature. It is the same with all the lower impulses, jealousy or envy, hatred or violence. These too are movements that seize you, waves that overwhelm and invade; they deform, they do not belong to the true character or the true nature; they are no intrinsic or inseparable part of yourself, but come out of the sea of surrounding obscurity in which move the forces of the lower nature.

It is a common error to suppose that action is impossible or at least meaningless without desire... The major part of the work done in the universe is accomplished without any interference of desire; it proceeds by the calm necessity and spontaneous law of Nature. Even man constantly does work of various kinds by a spontaneous impulse, intuition, instinct or acts in obedience to a natural necessity and law of forces without either mental planning or the urge of a conscious vital volition or emotional desire. Often enough his act is contrary to his intention or his desire; it proceeds out of him in subjection to a need or compulsion, in submission to an impulse, in obedience to a force in him that pushes for self-expression or in conscious pursuance of a higher principle. Desire is an additional lure to which Nature has given a great part in the life of animated beings in order to produce a certain kind of rajasic action necessary for her intermediate ends; but is not her sole or even her chief engine. It has its great use while it endures; it helps us to rise out of inertia, it contradicts many tamasic forces which would otherwise inhibit action. But the seeker... has to learn to act with an impersonal or a universal mind or as part or an instrument of an infinite Person. A calm indifference, a joyful impartiality or a blissful response to a divine Force, whatever its dictate, is the condition of his doing any effective

work or undertaking any worthwhile action. Not desire, not attachment must drive him, but a Will that stirs in a divine peace, a Knowledge that moves from the transcendent Light, a glad Impulse that is a force from the supreme Ananda.

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Aspiration towards Perfection

In works, aspiration towards Perfection is true spirituality.

Let nothing short of perfection be your ideal in work and you are sure to become a true instrument of the Divine.

Whatever work you do, do it as perfectly as you can. That is the best service to the Divine in man.

In work too there is an austerity. It consists in not having any preferences and in doing everything one does with interest. For one who wants to grow in self-perfection, there are no great or small tasks, none that are important or unimportant; all are equally useful for one who aspires for progress and self-mastery... one can learn to find interest in everything one does, even in what appear to be the most insignificant chores... Whatever occupation or task falls to your lot, you must do it with a will to progress; whatever one does, one must not only do it as best one can but strive to do it better and better in a constant effort for perfection. In this way everything without exception becomes interesting, from the most material chore to the most artistic and intellectual work. The scope for progress is infinite and can be applied to the smallest thing.

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Ways of Working Faster and Better

Most of you live on the surface of your being, exposed to the touch of external influences. You live almost projected, as it were, outside your body, and when you meet some unpleasant being similarly projected you get upset. The whole trouble arises out of your not being accustomed to stepping back. You must always step back into yourself, learn to go deep within, step back and you will be safe. Even if you are in a hurry to do something, step back for a while and you will discover to your surprise how much sooner and with what greater success your work can be done. If someone is angry with you, do not be' caught in his vibrations but simply step back and his anger, finding no support or response, will vanish. Always keep your peace resist all temptation to lose it. Never decide anything without stepping back, never speak a word without stepping back, never throw yourself into action without stepping back.

Generally when men are in a hurry, they do not do completely what they have to do or they do badly what they do. Well, there is a third way, it is to intensify one's concentration. If you do that you can gain half the time, even from a very short time...think only of what one is doing and not of anything else, not to make a movement too much, to make the exact movement in the most exact way, and you can do in fifteen minutes what you were formerly doing in half an hour, and do it well, at times even better, without forgetting anything, without leaving out anything, simply by the intensity of the concentration.

For all that you do—study, play, work—there is only one solution: to increase one's power of concentration. And when you acquire this concentration, it is no longer tiring. Naturally, in the beginning, it creates a tension, but when you have grown used to it, the tension diminishes and a moment comes when what fatigues you is to be not thus concentrated, to disperse yourself, allow yourself to be swallowed by all kinds of things, and not to concentrate on what you do. One can succeed in doing things even better and more quickly by the power of concentration. And in this way you can make use of work as a means of growth; otherwise you have this vague idea that work must be done "disinterestedly", but there is a great danger there, for one is very quick to confuse disinterestedness with indifference.

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If you want to do something well, whatever it may be, any kind of work, the last thing, play a game, write a book, do painting or music or run a race, anything at all, if you want to do it well, you must *become* what you are doing and not remain a small person looking at himself doing it; for if one looks at oneself acting, one is still in

complicity with the ego... if you want to do the work properly, you must *become* the work instead of being someone who works, otherwise you will never do it well.

Preferences

To choose without preference and execute without desire is the great difficulty at the very root of the development of true consciousness and self-control...one must learn to act without any preference, free from all attractions and likings, taking one's stand solely on the Truth which guides and having chosen in accordance with the Truth the necessary action, one must carry it out without any desire.

When the mind becomes silent, when it stops judging, pushing itself forward with its so-called knowledge, one begins to solve the problem of life. One must refrain from judging, for the mind is only an instrument of action, not an instrument of true knowledge—true knowledge comes from elsewhere.

At every minute of your life you must make a choice between what drags you down and what draws you up, between what makes you progress and what makes you go backwards; but I do not call this having preferences, I call this making a choice..! at every second the choice is before you, and you may take a step downward or a step upward, take a step backward or a step forward-But this choice does not imply that you prefer things to be like this or like that; it is a fact of every moment, an *attitude* that you take preferences means precisely not choosing. There is something for which you feel sympathy or antipathy, repulsion or attraction, and blindly, without any reason, you become attached to this thing; or else, when you have a problem to solve, you prefer the solution of this problem or this difficulty be of one particular kind or another..A preference is something blind, an impulse, an attachment, an unconscious movement which is usually terribly obstinate.

Choice means a decision and an action. Preference is a desire. A choice is made and ought to be made, and if it truly a choice, it is made without care for the consequences, without expecting any result. You choose according to your inner truth... and what comes about is not your concern. While, on the contrary, if you have preferences... your preferences will distort your choice: it will be calculation, bargaining, you will act with the idea that a particular thing must happen because this is what you prefer and not because that is the truth, the right thing to do. Preference is attached to the result, acts with a view to the result, wishes things to be in a particular way and acts to bring about its wish... Choice is independent of the result... And you do not choose really well, in all sincerity, unless it is the truth of the choice which interests you, and not the result of your choice.

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